

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. **(Currently Amended)** Detergent particles obtained by a process comprising the step of dry-neutralizing base particles comprising a water-soluble solid alkali inorganic substance (A) with a liquid acid precursor (B) of a non-soap anionic surfactant, wherein the base particles are obtained by a spray-drying method, and wherein the base particles contain the component (A) in an amount of equal to or greater than 4 times the amount equivalent for neutralizing the component (B), contain a zeolite in an amount of 10% by weight or less and have an average particle size of from 150 to 400  $\mu\text{m}$ .

2. **(Currently Amended)** Base particles having an average particle size of from 150 to 400  $\mu\text{m}$ , comprising 20 to 80% by weight of a water-soluble solid alkali inorganic substance and a zeolite in an amount of 10% by weight or less.

3. **(Currently Amended)** A process for preparing detergent particles comprising the steps of:

- (a): preparing a slurry comprising a water-soluble solid alkali inorganic substance (A) in an amount equal to or greater than 4 times the amount equivalent for neutralizing a liquid acid precursor (B) of a non-soap anionic surfactant to be added in step (c), and a zeolite in an amount of 10% by weight or less;
- (b): spray-drying the slurry obtained in step (a) to give base particles; and

(c): mixing the liquid acid precursor (B) with the base particles obtained in step (b) and dry-neutralizing the resulting mixture.

4. (Original) The process for preparing detergent particles according to claim 3, further comprising the step of:

(d) adding a fluidizing aid (C) to the detergent particles obtained in step (c), thereby surface-modifying the detergent particles.

5. (Original) A detergent composition comprising the detergent particles as defined in claim 1.